

South Gloucestershire infant and primary school coordinated admission scheme for academic year 2026/2027

The relevant area for all South Gloucestershire schools is the South Gloucestershire Local Authority administrative area.

This scheme will apply to all applications from parents/carers, for Reception Year admission in the academic year 2026/2027 for schools with the following admission authorities:

- South Gloucestershire Council, as Admission Authority for Community and Controlled infant and primary schools within South Gloucestershire;
- Admission Authorities for Voluntary Aided, Academy or Foundation schools in South Gloucestershire;
- Admission Authorities for other infant and primary schools in England.

Applications

Applications for Reception Year places at any infant/primary school for the academic year 2026/2027, for any of the Admission Authorities listed above, must be made by parents/carers on a common application form.

Parents/carers of children resident in South Gloucestershire have two options for completing the common application form: To apply on-line through the South Gloucestershire Council website or to print and complete the application form available to download on the South Gloucestershire Council website and return it to the address indicated on the form. The application process opens in early September 2025.

All parents/carers are strongly advised to give three preferences in rank order, giving reasons for their application, which can be for South Gloucestershire Community or Controlled Schools, Academies, Voluntary Aided Schools or other Admission Authority schools in England. South Gloucestershire will inform the other Admission Authorities of these applications

Parents/carers who do not live in South Gloucestershire but who wish to apply for a place at a South Gloucestershire infant/primary school must return the appropriate common application form to the Local Authority in which they live. If an application form is received from the parent/carer of a child living in England but outside the administrative area of South Gloucestershire, the form will be passed to the relevant home authority.

Where a common application form is sent direct to a school it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure the form is submitted to South Gloucestershire Council Admissions and Transport Team.

Should any parent/carer include on their application form a preference for an independent school, the independent school preference will be disregarded and the remaining preferences for schools will be given a higher ranking than that shown on the original application form.

All parents/carers must complete the common application form.

Completed common application forms for residents of South Gloucestershire must be returned directly to South Gloucestershire Admissions and Transport Team. Applications for a place will be considered only if parents/carers have submitted the completed common application form by the closing date of 15 January 2026. Any change in preference received before the closing time and date will supersede all previous applications which will be withdrawn.

Individual Admission Authorities for Voluntary Aided, Academy or Foundation schools may wish to use supplementary forms to collect additional information in order to apply their over-subscription criteria. Parents/carers will need to contact individual schools for information. Supplementary forms requesting additional information should be sent direct to the appropriate school.

Consideration of applications and allocation of places

Applications for all schools will be considered under an 'equal preference' system. All preferences will initially be considered equally regardless of ranking.

South Gloucestershire will pass the details of applications received, on to other Local Authorities as appropriate by 29 January 2026 by electronic data transfer. Own Admission Authority schools in South Gloucestershire, named on the common application forms, will be able to view applications via the school's admission portal by 3 February 2026. Academy Trusts/schools will also be sent details of the applications by electronic data transfer. Own Admission Authority schools will not be notified of the rank order of an applicant's preferences.

South Gloucestershire Voluntary Aided primary schools will be sent details of their applications by 3 February 2026 by electronic data transfer. Each school will consider and rank all applications received, including any supplementary data, with reference to their own over-subscription criteria where necessary. Ranked lists of all applicants will then be returned by electronic data transfer to South Gloucestershire by 24 February 2026. Ranked lists must include the category that each applicant qualifies for, against the over-subscription criteria, and in the order in which the offers, and additional offers will be made should places become available.

From 3 February 2026 Academy Trusts/schools in South Gloucestershire will liaise with the Admissions and Transport Team to validate the ranking of applicants against their own criteria. Where ranking has been fully or partially delegated to the Admissions and Transport Team it will confirm the accuracy of the process and the Academy Trust/school will confirm agreement to ratify

the final ranking of applicants. Ranking of on-time applicants will be agreed by 24 February 2026.

By 12 March 2026 South Gloucestershire will inform other Local Authorities of the offers to be made to parents/carers living in its area. By the same date, other Local Authorities will inform South Gloucestershire Local Authority of the outcome of applications made for other Local Authority schools by South Gloucestershire residents.

South Gloucestershire then considers all potential offers in order to determine the single offer of a Reception Year place to be made to parents/carers in its area.

Offers of a school place

On-line applicants will be able to view the outcome of their application for a school place on 16 April 2026 by logging onto the on-line system using their password. On-line applicants will be formally notified of the offer of a school place by email unless otherwise specified at the time of application. Applicants who applied using the paper application form will be notified of the offer of a school place by letter to be posted 1st class on 16 April 2026. South Gloucestershire Council is unable to inform parents/carers of the offer by telephone.

South Gloucestershire will make the single offer of a place for Reception Year to parents/carers resident within its area. Places will be allocated against the published admission criteria without reference to the applicant's order of preference. Where a child qualifies for a place at more than one school the highest ranked place available will be offered.

In the case of parents/carers resident in South Gloucestershire being refused a place at their preferred school(s), an alternative school place will be offered for their child at the nearest appropriate school/academy to the home address with a place available and they will be informed of the options available at that stage including their right of appeal.

Parents/carers must respond to the offer directly to South Gloucestershire by 30 April 2026. Where a response has not been received by 30 April 2026 South Gloucestershire will contact parents/carers to advise them of the need to respond within one week and point out that the place may be withdrawn if they do not. Where a place has been withdrawn this will be confirmed in writing to parents/carers.

Deferred entry

Pupils are normally admitted in the September of the school year in which they reach their fifth birthday, however they are not required to be in full time education until the term following their fifth birthday. Parents/carers can request that the date their child is admitted to school is deferred until later in the school year or until the child reaches compulsory school age in that

school year. Parents/carers may not defer admission beyond the academic year for which the original application was accepted. Therefore, any reception places applied for within this co-ordinated scheme must be taken up by the child by the beginning of Term 5 (April 2027).

Children born in the summer and whose parents do not wish them to start school until the term after their 5th birthday will have to make a separate in-year application for Year 1 for the following academic year unless there is a professional agreement that joining a lower year group is in the best interests of the child in which case a common application form will have to be completed for admission to reception in the academic year 2027/2028. In this case see the delayed admission section below.

Parents/carers can also request that their child attends part-time until the child reaches compulsory school age. Where a child attends school part-time, this would normally be for five morning sessions or five afternoon sessions each week as agreed with the individual school.

Attendance at a nursery class does not guarantee admission to a particular school for primary education. A separate application must be made for transfer from nursery to primary school.

Delayed entry

Delayed admission is where a child starts school a year later than their chronological age group. Parents/carers may request that their summer born child is admitted outside of their normal age group. A summer born child has a birth date between 1 April to 31 August. It is the responsibility of the admission authority to make the decision on the basis of the circumstances of each case. Factors considered by an admission authority when considering admission outside the normal age group include:

- the needs of the child and the possible impact on them of entering year 1 without having first attended the reception class;
- in the case of children born prematurely, the fact that they may have naturally fallen into the lower age group if they had been born on their expected date of birth;
- whether delayed social, emotional or physical development is adversely affecting their readiness for school.

To request a delayed admission, parents/carers must apply for a place during the standard application process timeline for their child's chronological age group, stating their reasons for requesting delayed entry to the following year. This can be done by completing the application form for delayed entry which is available on the website or by contacting the Admissions and Transport Team.

It is for own admission authority schools, academies and voluntary aided schools, to make the final decision. In respect of community and controlled schools, the local authority will make a decision in consultation with the head teacher of the preferred school(s).

An agreement to placement out of year group will not guarantee a school place for a child at any particular school, as any application will be considered against the published admission criteria, when the application is made for the following academic year.

Late applications and changes of preference

Applications received after the closing date are 'late applications' and will not normally be considered for the initial allocation of places. However, South Gloucestershire will consider the circumstances of a late application before deciding whether or not to process it along with the on-time applications.

A change of preference received after the closing date will be considered as a 'late application' unless there are exceptional circumstances for the change.

For over-subscribed schools, if places become available following the initial allocation of places for a school, the same admission criteria will be applied to 'late applications', applications where a formal appeal for a school has been made and applications for children whose parents/carers have indicated in writing that they still wish to be considered for a place (i.e. added to the waiting list). Where a place can be offered at a preferred school for a child on the waiting list, any place previously offered at a lower preference school will be withdrawn.

In the case of under-subscribed schools late applications will be considered in order of date of receipt. If any under-subscribed school becomes over-subscribed owing to the number of late applications, places will be allocated using the published over-subscription criteria, from the date when the school becomes over-subscribed

Details of late applications, on time applicants still seeking a place at their preferred schools and of places not accepted following the initial allocations will be exchanged with Voluntary Aided schools, Academies and other Local Authorities as far as possible between 30 April 2026 and 21 May 2026 to enable a second round of allocations for all schools to **commence** on 26 May 2026.

The co-ordinated admissions process will continue to be operated, with application data being exchanged with Voluntary Aided schools, Academies and other Local Authorities as appropriate, for all applications received up to 31 August 2026.

Waiting lists

The waiting list comprises of those children refused a place whose parents have lodged a formal appeal or asked to go on a waiting list together with any late applications received.

A waiting list will be maintained for any vacancies which occur until 31 December and then discarded. It is for each Admission Authority to determine

whether they will maintain waiting lists after 31 December 2026. Priority order on the waiting list will be determined by the over-subscription criteria, not by the date of joining the waiting list.

Children who are the subject of a direction by a Local Authority to admit or who are allocated to a school in accordance with the Fair Access Protocol must take precedence over those on a waiting list.

Where a place becomes available and the Local Authority, after using all advised contact details, is unable to contact a successful applicant for a place within two school weeks, the available place will be offered to the next child to qualify for a place. Where an applicant decides to place their child(ren)'s name on a waiting list, it is for the applicant to keep South Gloucestershire Council informed of updated contact and address details.

Withdrawing offers

Once the offer of a school place has been made, South Gloucestershire Council reserves the right to withdraw the offer but only in very limited circumstances, for example:

- where the application was intentionally misleading or fraudulent; or
- where a parent/carer has not responded to the offer within a reasonable time; or
- where it is possible to offer a higher named preference;
- where an error has been made by the local authority in offering the place.



Timetable for co-ordinated primary admissions for academic year 2026/2027

Closing date for all applications
15 January 2026

South Gloucestershire Local Authority sends details of applications received to other Local Authorities
by 29 January 2026

South Gloucestershire Local Authority sends details of applications received to VA and Foundation Schools and Academies in South Gloucestershire
by 3 February 2026

VA and Foundation Schools and Academies send lists of the pupils to be offered and/or refused places at their schools, indicating ranking and criterion under which considered, to South Gloucestershire Local Authority
by 24 February 2026

South Gloucestershire Local Authority to inform other Local Authorities of the outcome of applications made by their residents for schools within South Gloucestershire
by 12 March 2026

All South Gloucestershire schools informed by South Gloucestershire Local Authority of all final offers up to the Admission Number
by 25 March 2026

On-line applicants notified of the outcome of their application and letters posted to other applicants
16 April 2026

Parents/carers to respond to the offer of a school place
by 30 April 2026

Details of late applications, on time applicants still seeking a place at their preferred schools and of places not accepted, to be exchanged between LAs as far as possible between
30 April 2026 and 21 May 2026

On time appeals for community and controlled schools to be lodged by
21 May 2026

Second round of allocations to **commence** on
26 May 2026

Appeal process commences **end June 2026**